

“LOVE, A LA MODE:”

A SLIGHT SLAP AT

THE NEAT LITTLE ELOPEMENT,

AT TORONTO.

A VERY MORAL DISSERTATION.

“My verdict for the White Rose side.”—SHAKSPEARE.

LONDON, CANADA WEST:

1863.

14

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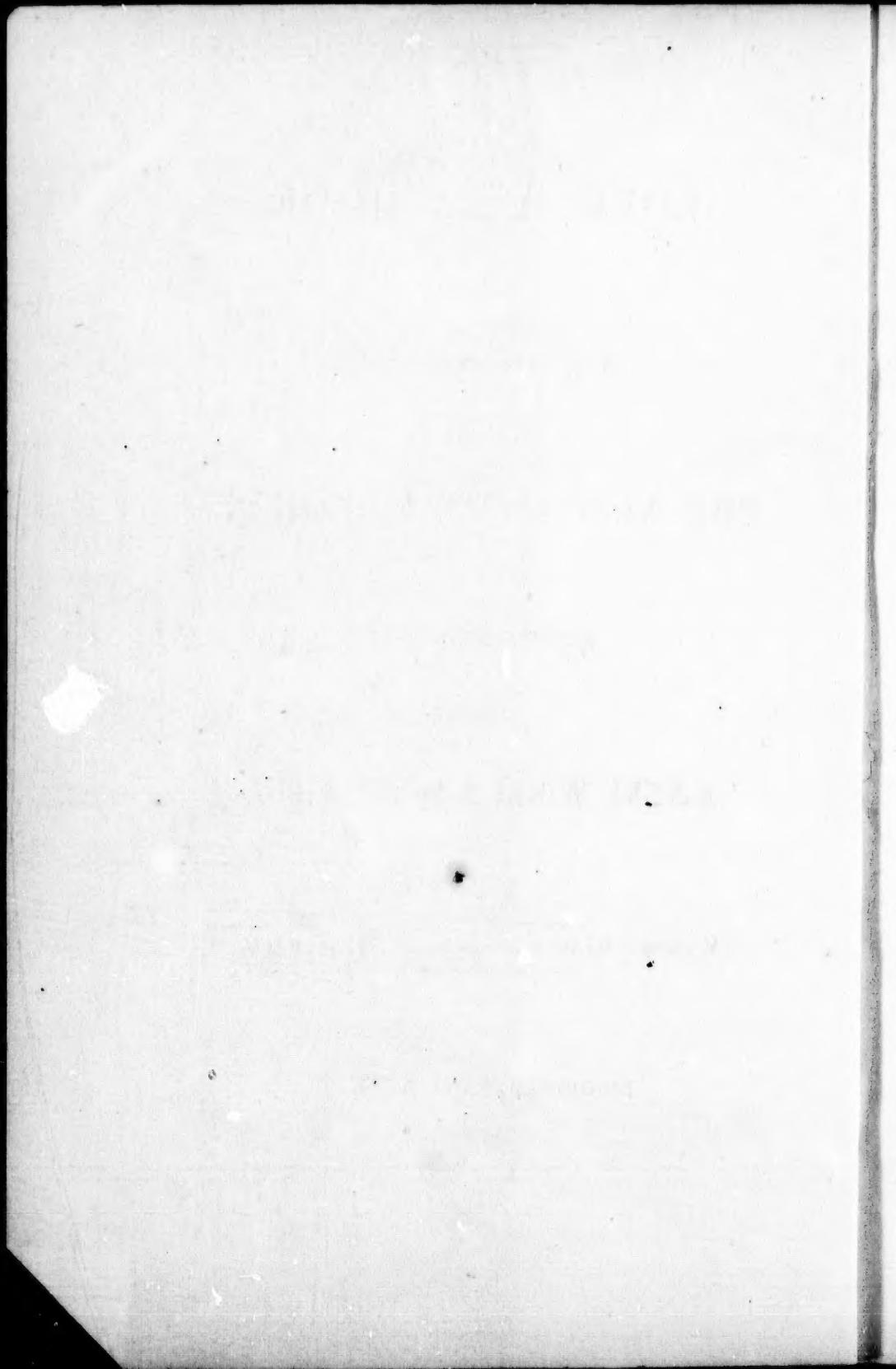
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**PART I.**

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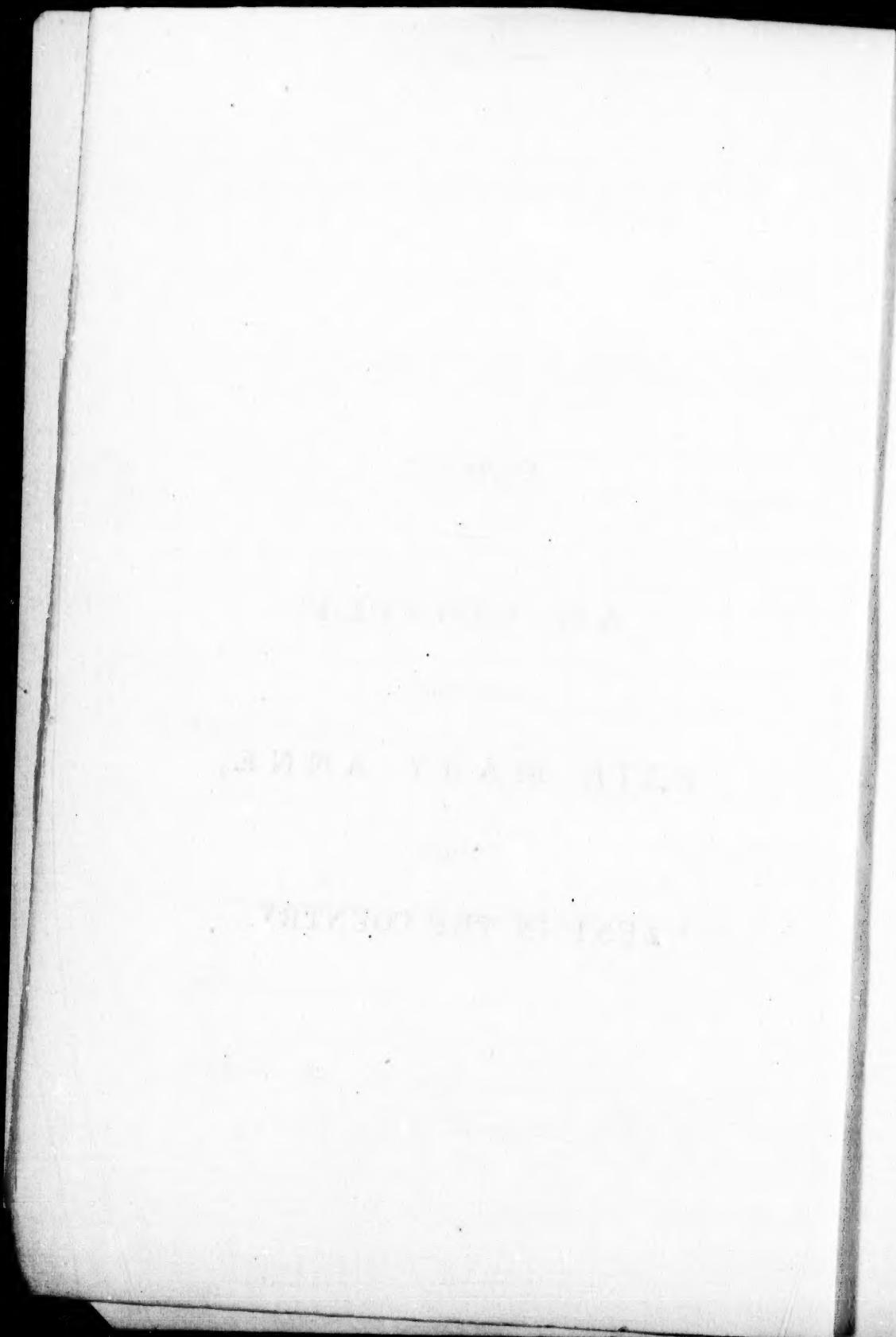
**AN EPISTLE**

**FROM THE**

**FAIR MARY ANNE,**

**TO HER**

**AUNT IN THE COUNTRY.**



## LOVE, A LA MODE.

---

Upper Tendom is thrilled by a wondrous  
commotion,  
The flutter of gossip and scandal is  
heard ;  
“Sweet sixteen” is seized with a trem-  
bling emotion,  
A wail greets the downfall of Fashion’s  
gay bird !  
Dear Aunty, the Captain who often I  
spoke of  
In letters to you as being such a sweet  
creature—  
A model of neatness, good manners and  
rank,  
(Though I changed my opinion so soon  
as he broke off

The little flirtation which he and I had,  
For I hate to make love just to suit a  
man's prank ;

In fact I'd have died had it been a civil-  
lian—

His position the highest—his fortune—  
a million ! )

Well—to cut matters short—the Captain  
has cleared

With a simpering female, just on  
eighteen—

An heiress—no beauty—a passable lass,  
Just fit for—allow the expression—AN  
ASS !

The Captain—I formerly told you—was  
feared

By his comrades in arms and his  
rivals in love.

The Ensigns were "no where"—Lieuten-  
ants were naught—

With eloquent missiles the Conqueror  
fought,

Using no fists as a weapon of war,  
(In this plebeian manner no gentleman  
fights ;)

And the Captain one evening thus  
candidly swore,

He believed in retreating on very dark  
nights,

As muscular feats were a terrible bore !

---

The first night on which Sassey whilst  
here met Miss Lavish,

I was sitting quite near them at Tal-  
lowhide's ball ;

The Captain was full of soft whispers  
and graces ;

(I could fathom this matter by  
watching their faces) --

His conduct was exquisite, tender, and  
knavish,

And I heard with my own ears, the  
saucy girl call

Him the handsomest man she had seen  
at the ball

I blushed for my dignity—this to his  
face!

Sufficient to herald eternal disgrace!

He grew bolder, caressing her hand  
in his own,

And whispered, "I'll give you my  
heart as a loan,

To see how you'll keep it;" while she  
in return

Said—"I'll keep it forever;" I felt my  
cheeks burn!

At that moment the gallant young  
Captain Allears

Tripped up to implore me to dance  
the next sett,

Or he'd "dwown all the guests in the  
room with his te-ahs"—  
I consented, and left the poor Captain  
in net!

---

I know, dearest Aunty, that temptation  
oft  
Lingers where melody, soothing and  
soft,  
Floats on the ear with a trembling  
bliss,  
And sound of rich gaiety, pleasure and  
joy,  
Combine to make earth appear free  
from alloy.  
I know that the pale stars of Heaven  
have power,  
A strange magic strength to allure us  
to love;

To make us believe life a fair blooming  
flower

As sacred and pure as the glories  
above!

And thus in surveying those forms in  
that room

All my rapture of soul passed away  
into gloom.

So very mysterious—so very—well, you  
see,

If I go on to describe—it will answer to  
jealousy!

Well, resuming my seat with an air of  
fatigue,

I could not but notice the Captain and  
she

Who sat by his side; for they both seemed  
to be

Equally smitten and equally sure

That the ripening passion would always  
endure.

A number of eyes were inspecting them  
now,  
And I noticed old ladies—yes, those who  
had daughters,  
Gaze on the two with such very strange  
looks,  
That I inwardly blushed ; though the Cap-  
tain's calm brow  
Retained its composure—his whiskers and  
hair  
Presenting the self-same immaculate air—  
As he leant with soft confidence over her  
chair,  
Conversing on flowers, foreign countries,  
and books.  
Just then Mrs. Peachblossom said to a  
neighbor,  
“ The Captain don't seem to grow tired of  
labor—  
He'll retain that girl's heart in his faithless  
possession

Until it's convenient to seek for a fresh  
one."

Her friends on the left appeared very  
much pleased,

And Mrs. P.'s satire each minute increased ;  
Indeed I considered it almost a miracle  
That the dropsical lady did not grow hys-  
terical.

This continued without intermission,  
until I

Concluded that Mrs. P.'s language was  
silly ;

So when Captain Allears laid claim to my  
hand

I gladly forsook this gossiping band.

---

Shall I tell you of all the gay drives and  
soft meetings

Which followed the night of the glorious  
ball ?

fresh                    Shall I tell of the tender significant greetings—  
very                    The coy invitations—the hour to call ?  
eased ;                Shall I tell of the missives—exchanging of  
ele                    pictures—  
w hys-                How hearts in return appeared permanent  
ssion,                fixtures ?  
was                    Shall I tell how the dandies and belles of  
to my                the city  
                      Gazed on the flirtation with well-assumed  
                      pity ;  
                      How Miss Gayboots expressed herself  
                      wholly disgusted,  
                      And vowed that till then she had never  
                      mistrusted  
                      The rich Captain's honor, or question'd his  
                      right  
                      To mingle in circles as high as polite !

---

Every one wonder'd—a good many sneer'd,  
The ladies indignantly turned up their  
noses—  
Or pouted their lips to the size of spring  
roses ;  
The “subjects,” however, would drive and  
would talk  
Though the whole of creation had been  
at their heels ;  
They went to the Theatre, flirted and  
danced  
From the giddiest waltz to the gayest of  
reels—  
Nature herself was amazed—and entranced  
With the festive young couple who never  
appeared  
To notice sly whispers or pay much atten-  
tion  
To stories of scandal unworthy of mention.

---

Dear Aunty, its really a matter for wonder  
That those who lay claim to be leaders  
of fashion  
Should glory in pulling good manners  
asunder,  
Encouraging those who spread gossip  
and scandal  
Instead of contemning and laying the  
lash on !

I truly believe that more evil finds vent  
From the mouths of the "upper-ten"—  
those who can cook  
The vilest sensations by means of a look ;  
Whose minds, by their living, are easily  
bent  
To favor the cause which seems safest to  
handle.

Those gold-blinded hypocrites—puff'd with  
pretence—  
Their very high standard, importance,  
and pow'r,

Who scorn the true principle moulded by  
sense,  
And nip honor's bud ere it blooms to a  
flower.

---

There's Flora Macfarlane, society's belle—  
Caressed by the fashion and "ton" of  
the city,  
Whose dresses and rings, and frivolty tell  
So much in her favor; she's clever and  
witty  
And judges esteem her decidedly pretty;  
Still no one is really in love with Miss  
Flora,  
She numbers admirers; no special adorer  
Is found at her shrine, for that cold selfish  
heart  
Knows not the true rapture which love  
may impart.  
No story of gossip is lost on her ear;

No rumor which she in her rounds will  
not hear,  
For she lives to spread scandal's most  
pertinent curse,  
By the strength of her tongue and the  
strings of her purse.  
Who could tell by the clasp of that  
hand the deceit,  
The falsehood of life, and the sin and  
the pride ?  
Who could pierce through that smile to  
the heart's deep retreat ;  
And fathom the follies that therein  
abide ?  
Who could tell by the frank and dis-  
passionate air—  
The delicate carriage—the beautiful  
face—  
That the flame of true virtue had  
vanished from there,  
And the soul was not perfect in  
Heavenly grace ?

Ah ! few know that only the classical  
form  
In redolent calmness remains to be  
seen ;  
The angelic mind could not brave the  
world's storm,  
And emerge from temptation in beauty  
serene :—  
And the tottering beggar who stoops to  
receive  
The alms which Miss Flora is pleased  
to bestow,  
Looks up, and in rapture, can scarcely  
believe,  
That a being so beautiful lingers below.  
Thus from highest to lowest, the world  
can deceive  
By an exquisite form and a dazzling  
show.

---

I know you will smile at my earnest address,  
Which startles myself — this I freely confess —  
Though it is not the cant of a crusty old maid,  
Whom society's mandate has cast in the shade ;  
Nor is it the grumbling epistle which burns,  
With sentences moulded in passion or spleen ;  
Cringingly servile and bitter by turns,  
For whatever I pen, dearest Aunty, I mean.  
Society's manners are easiest reformed  
By those whom its roseate pleasures have warned,  
Who, possessing an infinite knowledge and skill,  
Can prune these shortcomings and follies at will !

Well, leaving the failings of Fashion at  
large,  
And giving her yot'ries an honest dis-  
charge,  
Allow me to turn to the primitive  
cause  
Of my virtuous discourse on Etiquette's  
laws.  
The Queen City was thunder-struck—  
Gossip now told,  
How the maiden had flown with the  
Captain so bold ;  
How that delicate girl, without license  
or bann,  
Had eloped with a dashing and wealthy  
young man.

---

The milliner's stared; they had scented  
afar,  
The day when Toronto's most promising  
star,  
Would prepare for a bridal—and then,  
with success,  
Their plebeian fingers would fashion her  
dress;  
And the tailors, in sorrow, droop'd over  
work,  
The dreams of the future transform'd  
into mist;  
The elopement produced the ninth part  
of a jerk  
At their heart-strings—the poor fellows  
couldn't resist,  
A few imprecations on one who would  
thrust 'em  
Away from his door to give Yankees  
his custom:  
And the jewellers too—those artists of  
gold,

Shook their heads in despair—for  
their wisdom had built,  
The most wonderful castles in diamond  
and gilt,  
But instead of selling—the dealers were  
sold.

---

Now, there's no earthly reason why I  
should relate,  
All that Scandal and Gossip were  
ready to tell;  
The man and the maiden had chosen  
their fate  
In the hour of temptation, and—  
human-like—fell!  
It is not for mortals to centre the  
blame  
On one or the other; the venomous  
flame

Of sin has left furrows and scars on  
each heart,  
Which are moulded by Error — though  
hidden by Art !  
Still, I feel no compassion for one who  
would dare  
To subject her sex to a blot of dis-  
grace ;  
Who'd allow the eighth part of a  
dandified stare,  
Without teaching the lord of Creation  
his place !  
“ Woman's Rights ” in the social scale  
need much reform,  
And, though not a Bloomer, I know  
just the line,  
Over which a brazen-faced being may  
breathe ;  
And I find that where plumage appears  
to be fine,  
There often dwells something suspicious  
beneath —

And the longer the face and graver the  
eye,  
In man or in woman, but makes me  
thus feel,  
That the Demon of Humbug is burning  
to steal  
Humanity's Right, by acting a lie.

---

Dear Aunty, I know you will deem  
this discourse,  
Not exactly the thing for a girl of  
my age—  
And doubtless be somewhat amazed at  
the force,  
Of your dainty young niece in the  
garb of a sage,  
But, believe me, I realize Fashion's  
mistake,

In turning her smiles from the laboring poor,  
Whilst the wealthy and proud by the hand she will take,  
And, forgetting their sins, lead them in at her door ;  
Where a calm rosy sweetness steals into the heart,  
And bloom and soft murmurs wreath garlands of bliss,  
Where poesy's charm, and the painter's soft art, [abyss !  
Combine to cast beauty o'er Fashion's  
Where the passions are roused by this dream of delight,  
Aad a thrill of temptation burns into the heart,  
While the senses of Reason, and Honor, and Right,  
In a flood of treacherous pleasure depart !

Now I've done for to-night, dearest  
Aunty, and close  
With a hope that you'll answer this  
gossiping letter,  
By something whose wisdom will give  
me repose,  
And make us poor mortals seem wiser  
and better.  
Love in your days, dear Aunty, was  
somewhat the same,  
Though a little platonic—and rather too  
tame;  
But this present feature from Cupid's  
abode,  
Keeps up with the standard of "LOVE,  
A LA MODE."

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Love,

## AUNTY'S REPLY

TO THE

FAIR MARY ANNE.



MY DEAR MARY ANNE, with a thrill of  
delight,  
I read your most welcome epistle last  
night,  
For there I could see that the lessons  
I taught  
You in youth had not faded beneath  
Fashion's glow ;  
That your mind was not made up of  
tinsel or show,  
And against the world's follies had  
skillfully fought !

---

You cannot imagine my sorrow to hear,  
The false step which your friend Miss  
Lavish has taken—  
A step which most bitter regret will  
awaken,  
And one which true virtue would  
fearlessly spurn.

To be sure, the temptation, to one  
whose young heart,  
Was weak from its very simplicity—  
came  
In the form of staunch manhood, and  
acted a part  
With the hypocrite's smile and in  
friendship's pure name !  
Still, in days of fast stories---fast mothers  
and schools,  
Amongst girls of eighteen there are very  
few fools ;  
And I'm prone to believe that a maiden  
with sense  
To make love to a man---is her own  
best defence---  
If she wishes to baffle his skill and  
his art,  
The battery lies in her brain and her  
heart.

---

Alas, for the world ! Nature's model  
has gone,  
And the Children of Fashion create a  
new dawn !  
The science of flirting is driven to grief,  
And sentiment utters a sigh for relief ;  
The Poets---those blazing supporters of  
youth---  
Are robbed of each fiery sentence to  
give  
Expression to feelings dictated, forsooth,  
By a whimsical passion, whose strength  
cannot live,  
But exists on the beauties and sweets  
which environ  
The thoughts of proud songsters like  
Shelley or Byron !  
A wonderful virtue exists in the form  
Of her Majesty's servant's ;---the ladies  
believe  
Them the pink of perfection---while each  
one is keen

To net the sharp victim, who laughs in  
his sleeve  
At the racy young maiden, grown reckless  
and bold  
In order to share his position and gold !  
And I declare, for everyone must know't,  
That all this virtue lies in the red  
coat.  
His simplest "hum" or "haw" may  
echo flat,  
The Queen's commission counteracts all  
that;  
And half the daughters of a Christian  
nation,  
Forget the fool whilst worshipping his  
station ;  
Beaming their honey'd smiles — enough  
to kill a  
Common man—but not a trained Gorilla !  
Now dear Mary Anne you must not  
detest

Philosophical discourse—for, doing my  
best

I cannot resist putting in a sly word,  
Whilst viewing the “downfall of Fashion’s  
gay bird.”

I was once, like yourself, very foolish  
and giddy,

For flirting or dancing—eternally ready;  
And, indeed, to be candid, was rather  
too partial,

To anything scarlet—I mean anything  
martial.

However, I learned in the days of my  
youth,

To be guided by principle, justice, and  
truth,

And — keenly observing—I declare, to  
my knowledge,

There are men cooped in Barracks who  
should be at College.

Commissioned to shew how an army’s  
arrayed—

Pomaded and plastered for Ball-room  
parade;  
Full of soft nonsense—devoid of meaning,  
And spouting the English which sadly  
needs cleaning.  
In short, they imagine their fame so  
prodigious,  
That they would not for worlds be considered religious:  
Their creed is summed up in a few  
words like these—  
“Who flatters the highest is surest to  
please;”  
And she who can gabble—wear hoops  
and a bodice,  
Is made to esteem herself more than a  
goddess,  
And this by a spooney young sprig  
out of place,  
Whose fortune consists of the brass on  
his face!

Yet this bitter-sweet model, 'twixt hum,  
haw, and stutter,

By his simplest advances makes woman's  
heart flutter !

Take for instance the life of a modernized  
Miss,

Whose course appears one of unparalleled  
bliss ;

Her mind stored with gems from the words  
of romance,

Whilst "exclusive circles" these rare gifts  
enhance — ;

The rules of "her own sex" are strict in  
their aim

Of teaching the worth of position and  
fame ;

In leading the mind to a climax of pride,  
And seething the heart with a burning  
desire —

Till virtuous love is no longer the guide —

And the victim's ambition mounts higher  
and higher,  
While the beams of pure womanhood  
meekly expire.

---

'Tis true that the "Upper-ten" open the  
way  
To sins which the poor are unable to  
know,  
That their hearts are too prone passion's  
voice to obey  
And that souls are seduced by their  
splendor and show ;  
But withal this hard-hitting at Fashion's  
gay throng  
There is one class of people who seldom  
receive  
A proper reward for the sins and the wrong  
Which their vile impositions so often  
achieve :—

I allude to the class which the varying  
wheel

Of fortune has lifted above their estate—  
Who too stupid to know, and too selfish to  
feel,

Are seduced by the charms of position  
and state,

As they come from the garret, or out of the  
hovel,

To be fann'd whilst they read the last sen-  
sation novel,

To tread on soft carpets and loll at their  
ease,

And gratify fancies too num'rous to please.  
For as pride and ambition grow daily im-  
mense

They'd rule all the world—if endowed  
with the sense;

And seek by attractions of money and  
dress

To win the soft solace of Fashion's caress !

With envious passions traducing the one

Whose form does not bask in "Society's"  
sun ;  
And first to lend cunning and crafty sup-  
port  
To the slanderous tale and the libellous  
sneer,  
If breathed by the "circles" whose pleas-  
ures they court,  
With an eloquent smile and a cowardly  
fear.  
By these the fair banners of union and  
trust  
Are dragged to the earth till they trail in  
the dust,  
And the virulent poison of worldly deceit  
Proves Honor a shadow and Fashion a  
cheat.

---

But my pen is not trimmed for much writing to night,  
Though the heavens are brilliant with beauty and light;  
And Nature still breathes of a calmer abode  
When the soul passes safely o'er life's thorny road:  
And the langour, and sorrow, and trouble  
of earth  
Glide calmly through death to a purified birth,  
Where the flutter of fashion, and scandal  
and sin  
Are unknown to the spirits who enter  
therein.  
And the burning temptation and passionate  
ate wiles  
Of earth pass away in contentment and  
smiles;  
Not a vision of terror glides over the heart,  
Not a dream which could mar the perfection of love,

Not a feature is glossed by the radiance  
of Art—

All is Nature, as viewed in the regions  
above !

There the tinsel, and humbug, and power  
of gold,

And the cant of the hypocrite fail in  
their aim ;

No position by trickster's is bartered or  
sold,

But the rich and the poor are considered  
the same :

And the weight of the heart and the truth  
of the soul

Are passports to Heaven's most purified  
goal ;

And the cant of the world and the scanda-  
lous lie

In throes of deep anguish and misery die.

Whilst those who have turned from the  
virtuous course

Of life, are left wailing in bitter remorse,  
And a mandate from Heaven can only  
release  
The Destroyer of Innocent Graces and  
Peace !  
And thus whilst we feel all humanity's  
woes,  
In the dim dreary midnight one kindly  
beam glows;  
And the downfall of Fashion, and follies of  
youth  
Convince us of Heaven's most glorious  
Truth—  
That Happiness, Safety, and Pleasure are  
found  
By those whom the laurels of Virtue sur-  
round :  
God grant then that mortals may seek  
the true road,  
And shun the vile meshes of **LOVE, A LA  
MODE !**